

**COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**10th March 2010**

**Report of the Director of Leisure and Environment**

ITEM 6     Equality and Diversity Update Report

Purpose of Report

This report provides an update on actions currently being undertaken with regard to equality and diversity across the Council.

Action Requested

The Committee consider the update on equality and diversity in the report.

Policy Context

As a public authority, Charnwood Borough Council has a legal requirement to promote equality in relation to disability, gender, gender reassignment and race. It is likely that the new Equality Bill (currently going through Parliament) will extend existing equality duties to cover all the equality strands, extending to age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

The CAA framework also makes clear that in assessing progress on delivering outcomes and improvements the Audit Commission will look for evidence that the organisation is tackling inequality and improving outcomes for people in vulnerable circumstances. They also want to see that equality impact assessments are carried out effectively and positive changes are made as a result.

Update

The action plan attached shows the work that has been done in the last few months, however a brief summary update is provided below:

**Engagement**

A session was run in December with Directors and Heads of Service to raise awareness of equality and diversity and provide an interactive and informative way of discussing issues. The session covered a number of topics and highlighted key areas the Council should explore further eg workforce profiling (see below).

During January and February sessions have been held with all Heads of Service to highlight the new Equality Impact Assessment process, potential legislative changes if the new Single Equality Bill is passed in the spring, the equality framework for local government and to understand where heads of service feel they need more training and support. Additionally all services have been asked to complete a brief questionnaire on various aspects of equality and diversity, which will form part of our initial assessment against the equality framework and identify key areas for the Council to focus on in progressing towards meeting the framework.

## **Equality Impact Assessments (EIA)**

A new Equality Impact Assessment template has been created and all heads of service have committed to completing an assessment for service reviews and planned policy changes over the next few months. A schedule of EIAs is being developed from this information and training will also be provided.

## **Training**

The induction training module has been revised to provide more focus on what this means for individuals on a day to day basis. A training programme is being developed that will include Equality Impact Assessments, new legislation, a refresher for those who haven't done the induction or feel they need it and sessions exploring some of the specific equality strands e.g. race, religion and disability.

## **Equality Schemes**

Charnwood currently has equality schemes for race, disability and gender. These must be updated by the end of this year and the work to review progress against the schemes has started. Further work will be undertaken to set new objectives for the schemes for the next 3 years.

## **Website**

The internet has been updated to remove old documentation and as EIAs and new templates and guidance are produced these will be published on the website.

The intranet is also being revamped to remove old information and ensure it is more accessible to staff within the Council.

## Financial and Legal Implications

No Financial or Legal Implications at this stage

## Risk Management

The risks associated with the options available and proposed actions to mitigate those risks are set out in the table below.

| Risk Identified                                       | Likelihood | Impact | Risk Management Actions Planned |
|---|------------|--------|---------------------------------|
| Failure to meet the Councils legislative requirements | medium     | high   | Action plan attached            |
|   |            |        |                                 |

Background Papers: Community and Partnerships Committee October 2009

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|               |                               |              |               |
|---------------|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| <b>Title:</b> | Equality and Diversity        | <b>Date:</b> | February 2010 |
| <b>Team:</b>  | Chris Traill, Rachel Beaumont |              |               |

| <b>I. Effective Management</b> |  |   |                      |                     |   |
|--------------------------------|--|---|----------------------|---------------------|---|
| <b>No</b>                      | <b>Recommendation</b>  | <b>Actions</b>  | <b>Target Date</b>   | <b>Lead Officer</b> | <b>Task Status</b>  |
| <b>1.1</b>                     | Effective and dedicated officer/managerial resource to strategically manage equality – working to an agreed action plan and with advisory responsibilities to corporate directorate/members  | Chris Traill providing Director lead for E&D, Rachel Beaumont has E&D responsibility – unlikely to achieve dedicated resource due to current economic climate.<br><b>1.1a</b> Consider options for provision of expert advice on E&D within the Council – investigate Knowledge Sharing Partnership | End of November 2009 | Rachel Beaumont     | 1. KSP – cost £30K<br>2. Still exploring shared service with other districts and County                                       |
| <b>1.2</b>                     | Proactive officer support to provide a co-ordinating approach to legal requirements – e.g. in relation to current equality schemes, impact assessment, and in understanding and making the changes required to meet the requirements in forthcoming equality legislation   | <b>1.2a</b> Use Diversity Challenge as an initial way of raising awareness and engaging with CMT so that they understand their responsibilities, particularly with regard to legislation  | December 2009        | Rachel Beaumont     | 1. Diversity Challenge held on 9/12/09<br>2. Meetings with all heads of service during Jan/early Feb                          |
| <b>1.3</b>                     | A 'back to basics' approach to training and development support for officers and managers in effectively managing equalities (policy and service planning) at departmental and team level including learning and sharing from good practice. This should include information on what the new Equality Bill will mean in practice, particularly in relation to 'setting objectives' | <b>1.3a</b> Review current training and consider updating.  | End of January 2010  | Rachel Beaumont     | 1. Meeting held on 14/01/10<br>2. Induction redesigned and new one will be rolled out on 4/3                                  |
|                                |  | <b>1.3b</b> Introduce new regular training on legal updates, CBC equality schemes, EIAs etc   | From January 2010    |                     | 1. Input from HoS on contents of an overall training plan for the year<br>2. EIA training currently being sourced for Mar/Apr |

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|--------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------|---------------------|--|
| <b>No</b>                      | <b>Recommendation</b>   | <b>Actions</b>   | <b>Target Date</b>    | <b>Lead Officer</b> | <b>Task Status</b>   |
| <b>1.4</b>                     | Engagement processes in place for staff and manager engagement and involvement at an early level – including a pre assessment of views to inform approach. Link this to a refresh of the current equalities board terms of reference and responsibilities | <b>1.4a</b> Put a process and plan in place for engaging with staff and managers on E&D – linked to Customer First programme | End of November 2009  |                     |  |
| <b>1.5</b>                     | Clear terms of reference and a programme of work for equality champions and leaders (backed up by advice, support and training as needed)   | <b>1.5a</b> Terms of reference for the Customer Group with particular reference to E&D                                       | End of September 2009 |                     | 1. Completed in Oct 09<br>2. However group since disbanded and consideration is be given to a new group linked with CSE    |
|                                |   | <b>1.5b</b> Clear TOR for CT and RB roles  | End of September 2009 |                     | 1. Completed Dec 09  |
|                                |   | <b>1.5c</b> Refresh and update E&D website   | End of March 2010     |                     | 1. E&D Internet has been updated and old documents removed<br>2. Intranet has been reviewed and is currently being updated |
| <b>1.6</b>                     | Assessment and refresh of current Equality Scheme to take account of current legal responsibilities and requirements. It is suggested that this concentrates on getting the EIA's right and the action plan/targets at service level.                     | <b>1.6a</b> Review and update Equality Scheme as per recommendation  | December 2010         |                     | 1. Meeting set up for 1/3 with CT/RB to go through equality schemes and assess how much we have done against objectives    |
| <b>1.7</b>                     | Team plans to be re-aligned to consider corporate objectives, legal requirements and  | <b>1.7a</b> Ensure team planning process aligns to corporate objectives etc and  | Start for 2010        |                     | 1. Being done as part of 2010/11 team  |

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|                                | service outcomes (based on equality assessments for EFLG)  | includes specific equality and diversity actions as identified through EIAs and consultation                          | planning process   |                     | plans<br>2. Specific objectives to be ascertained during review of equality schemes |
| <b>1.8</b>                     | Performance management structures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ assessment and refresh to include corporate and service equality performance objectives</li> <li>▪ clear lines of responsibility for reporting (equality) outcomes for managers (provide training and development support where needed/identified)</li> <li>▪ refresh (equality) IT systems and reporting structures to ensure that outcomes can be measured in relation to targets set.</li> </ul> | <b>1.8a</b> Review corporate E&D objectives and targets   | December 2010      |                     |   |
|                                |  | <b>1.8b</b> Clarify R&R in relation to monitoring and reporting equality outcomes and targets                         | December 2010      |                     |   |
| <b>1.9</b>                     | In addition it is recommended that council should re-set its targets towards meeting the 'developing level' of the Equality Framework for Local Government within the next twelve months – undertake a self-assessment, and then commence towards the 'achieving level'.   | <b>1.9a</b> Training and awareness for staff on EFECT   | June 2010          |                     | 1. To be considered as part of CSE  |
|                                |  | <b>1.9b</b> Complete developing level assessment using EFECT toolkit and create actions plans for addressing the gaps | September 2010     |                     |   |
|                                |  | <b>1.9c</b> Address actions for addressing the gaps at Developing level   | September 2010     |                     |   |
|                                |  | <b>1.9d</b> Complete achieving level assessment using EFECT toolkit and create action plans for addressing gaps       | March 2011         |                     |   |
|                                |  | <b>1.9e</b> Address action plans for addressing gaps Achieving level  | September 2011     |                     |   |
|                                |  | <b>1.9f</b> Peer review against Achieving level   | December           |                     |   |

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|--------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>No</b>                      | <b>Recommendation</b> | <b>Actions</b> | <b>Target Date</b>   | <b>Lead Officer</b> | <b>Task Status</b> |
|                                |                       |                | 2011 - March<br>2012 |                     |                    |

| <b>2. Consultation and Engagement</b> |   |  |                                 |                     |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|---------------------------------|---------------------|---|
| <b>No</b>                             | <b>Recommendation</b>   | <b>Actions</b>   | <b>Target Date</b>              | <b>Lead Officer</b> | <b>Task Status</b>  |
| 2.1                                   | The council does carry out a range of consultations and has put in place structures that stand it in good stead to continue to refine and improve its approach. Therefore this is an area of overall strength for the council and has enabled it to concentrate on specific areas of local needs. However there is much more scope and potential for the council to engage with stakeholders as part of its scrutiny and challenge processes, as well as in improving capacity for stakeholders to be engaged as 'consultation partners'. The council now needs to ensure that it is consulting stakeholders effectively in meeting current statutory duties in relation equality schemes and statutory requirements, and seeks ways of doing so when carrying out impact assessments. The council should also ensure that stakeholders are reflective of core equality strands as well as priority groups. | <b>2.1a</b> Amend EIA process to ensure it includes how, when and how much stakeholder consultation to undertake (linked to 3.1a). | November 2009                   |                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Process and templates created. Initial views sought from Customer First group. Raised on Diversity Challenge. Sessions with Heads of Service throughout January</li> <li>2. Discussed with HoS who have all committed to complete EIA.</li> <li>3. Specific action with Service Review process</li> <li>4. To recommend to Cabinet that EIAs are included in Cabinet reports</li> </ol> |
| 2.2                                   | It is recommended therefore that the council review its current arrangements for consultation as part of its overall strategic planning activities. The review should ascertain and support service level consultation to be much more stringent in relation to statutory requirements.   | <b>2.2a</b> Review current arrangements for consultation as part of overall strategic planning activities (linked to 1.7a).        | Start for 2010 planning process |                     |   |
| 2.3                                   | Monitoring should be carried out to ensure that the councils own consultation strategies are effectively understood and applied across all service areas and departments.   |  |                                 |                     |   |

| <b>3. Impact Assessment and Public Sector Duties</b> |  |  |                                 |                     |  |
|--|--|--|---------------------------------|---------------------|--|
| <b>No</b>  | <b>Recommendation</b>  | <b>Actions</b>   | <b>Target Date</b>              | <b>Lead Officer</b> | <b>Task Status</b>   |
| <b>3.1</b>   | Whilst the legislation is changing, the main changes are not likely to take effect until at least 2011. Therefore the council must take measures now to ensure that it is meeting current statutory requirements. It is recommended however that any refresh of current policies and practices should also be cognizant of forthcoming changes to legislation. | <b>3.1a</b> Review and amend EIA process, taking into account any forthcoming legislative changes, monitoring arrangements and quality assurance | November 2009                   |                     | See 2.1a   |
| <b>3.2</b>   | It is recommended that additional training is provided on EIA in relation to general awareness and additional support training for key staff and managers within departments   | <b>3.2a</b> Once a new process has been established, create an awareness and training plan for key staff   | End December 2009               |                     | 1. HoS sessions<br>2. Training being sourced                           |
|  |  | <b>3.2b</b> Start awareness and training on EIAs for key staff   | Start January 2010 – March 2010 |                     | See above  |
| <b>3.3</b>   | More detailed training and development support for core staff charged with specific responsibility for equality within departments and corporately. The council may also wish to consider building in training for stakeholders and member development, particularly in relation to the scrutiny and community leadership role expectations.                   | <b>3.3a</b> Review all E&D training and consider any amendments inline with the recommendation – linked to 1.3.                                  | December 2009 onwards           |                     | 1. Meeting on 14/01/10<br>2. Training plan under development – see 1.3 |

| <b>4. Employment</b> |  |   |                    |                     |   |
|----------------------|--|---|--------------------|---------------------|---|
| <b>No</b>            | <b>Recommendation</b>  | <b>Actions</b>  | <b>Target Date</b> | <b>Lead Officer</b> | <b>Task Status</b>  |
| 4.1                  | It is recommended that the council reviews its strategy for improving performance in this area and provides a clear process for measuring successes based on its objectives  | <b>4.1a</b> Undertake an audit on key employment stats e.g. equal pay, data collection on the workforce profile, levels of grievance and disciplinary               | March 2010         |                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meeting held with JB on 05/01/10.</li> <li>2. Initial analysis done on Gender, BME and Age.</li> <li>3. Survey for women to be conducted to understand if there are any barriers to progression within the Council</li> </ol> |
| 4.2                  | The council should provide detailed information on how it intends to support its employment ambitions, relate this clearly to priority groups and set clear outcome based targets that are measurable, and support the council in making a true assessment of the success of its employment policies and practices (across all equality priority groups/and or local targets). | <b>4.2a</b> As part of reviewing equality scheme (links to 1.6) ensure that it includes clarity on what our employment ambitions are and how we will deliver these. | December 2010      |                     |   |
|                      |  | <b>4.2b</b> Review and set clear targets for priority groups within the workforce.  | March 2010         |                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discussed with JB on 5/1 and more work to be undertaken on 26/1.</li> <li>2. See 4.1</li> </ol>   |
| 4.3                  | Clearer information should be provided (for public scrutiny) as part of the current public sector equality duties and reflected in the Equality Scheme.  | <b>4.3a</b> Links to updating Equality Scheme in 1.6  | December 2010      |                     |   |
|                      |  | <b>4.3b</b> Provide an initial update on this action plan to Cabinet  | November 2009      |                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Equality and Diversity went to Scrutiny in Oct 09.</li> <li>2. Scheduled for May Performance Scrutiny</li> </ol>  |
| 4.4                  | Training and development is recommended on   | <b>4.4a</b> Links to 1.3.   | December           |                     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. See 1.3</li> </ol>  |

| <b>4. Employment</b> |   |                |                    |                     |                    |
|----------------------|---|----------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| <b>No</b>            | <b>Recommendation</b>   | <b>Actions</b> | <b>Target Date</b> | <b>Lead Officer</b> | <b>Task Status</b> |
|                      | the implications of forthcoming Equality Bill proposals for core staff. |                | 2009 onwards       |                     |                    |

| <b>5. Working with the Equality Framework for Local Government</b> |  |   |                    |                     |   |
|--|--|---|--------------------|---------------------|---|
| <b>No</b>  | <b>Recommendation</b>  | <b>Actions</b>  | <b>Target Date</b> | <b>Lead Officer</b> | <b>Task Status</b>  |
| 5.1  | It is recommended that the council should consider using the new EFLG, with this providing the council with an assessment and refresh of what it needs to put in place – i.e. starting at the Developing level and carrying out a review and self assessment at this level before moving onto the Achieving level. It is vitally important that the council sets out the structures that it intends to put in place to achieve this, communicates this and engages clearly with staff. | <b>5.1a</b> Set out clear action plan, roles and responsibilities, training plans, and staff engagement for self-assessment at developing level and subsequently moving towards Achieving level using the EFECT toolkit to track evidence and action plans. | December 2009      |                     | I. This should be clearly linked with plans for CSE as there is a lot of duplication between the 2 and we do not want to collect information twice. |